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UKRAINIAN FORCES MAKE THEIR FIRST LARGE-SCALE INCURSION INTO RUSSIA

Russia was on Wednesday trying to repel a major incursion by Ukrainian forces in its Kursk region with thousands of residents evacuated

1,000 UKRAINIAN TROOPS INVOLVED: KREMLIN

Russian army chief Valery Gerasimov said up to 1,000 Ukrainian troops are involved in the cross-border attack, the largest by Ukraine since Russia's full-scale invasion two years ago. Ukraine-backed armed groups had made several brief incursions into Russia before. But this operation is unprecedented for its deployment of Ukrainian military units. Ukraine is yet to confirm the operation

AT LEAST FIVE CIVILIANS KILLED IN KURSK

- At least five civilians were killed as per a Russian official. President Vladimir Putin said Ukraine was carrying out a "large-scale provocation"
- Reports said Ukrainian troops reached Sudzha, some 8 km inside Russia. Analysts say Kyiv's aim could be to draw Russian reserves to the area, and weaken Moscow's operations in others parts of Ukraine | P12

6,000
PEOPLE ARE BEING EVACUATED FROM KURSK, RUSSIAN OFFICIALS SAID

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

NEW FLASHPOINT

Waqf Bill may go to House panel after it is tabled today

PREETHA NAIR AND RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @New Delhi

A day before it is expected to table the Waqf (Amendment) Bill that is expected to become another flashpoint in the Lok Sabha, the Centre appeared amenable to the Opposition's demand for sending it to a Parliament standing committee for detailed scrutiny.

The government told Parliament's Business Advisory Committee (BAC) meeting on Wednesday that it will take a call on sending the bill to a House panel after it is tabled in the Lower House. It said it would not press for a discussion on the bill and its passage after introduction. The Centre will then seek the Rajya Sabha's nod to withdraw the Waqf Properties (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Bill, 2014.

The bill was circulated among LS members on Tuesday night ahead of its introduction, as reported by this paper.

Sources said there is a possibility that government will agree to Opposition's demand. They said certain parties supportive of the Centre have expressed reservations over the proposed legislation.

100 gms bury Vinesh's medal dream

On cusp of history, 29-year-old wrestler doesn't make weight cut, disqualified from 50 kg final

> Vinesh was found to be 100 gms over her 50 kg weight category. All possible measures, including cutting off her hair, were used
>
> — Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala

ALL-NIGHT EFFORT

Vinesh exercised. She used the sauna. She sparred & pulled an all-nighter in the hope of keeping a childhood dream alive

IOA DIALS UWW

Indian Olympic Association tried speaking with the United World Wrestling but the world body maintained rules are rules

IOA president PT Usha meets distraught wrestler Vinesh Phogat at the Games Village polyclinic on Wednesday | IOA

AFTER a night and day of high drama, it's perhaps poetic that Vinesh Phogat's Olympics fate will be decided not by fellow athletes but by people in suits. If it was to be decided by athletes, she would have had at least a silver now. But because it's going to be decided by administrators and lawyers, her hopes of coming back from Paris with a medal remains hanging by the slenderest of threads imaginable. On Wednesday morning, Phogat fell short by 100 grams at the weigh-in some 12 hours before a possible history-making gold medal bout. The weighing scale should have returned a reading of 50.00 or below. It returned a reading of 50.10 — she was disqualified.

After sitting on it for the entire day in Paris — some of it spent inside a facility while she being administered drips after a night from hell — Phogat and her team decided to appeal United World Wrestling's (UWW) decision at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), a world body created for settling sporting disputes.

In a cruel twist of fate, it began as soon as Phogat entered the final of the women's 50 kg at the Olympics on Tuesday night. As somebody who has historically had a problem in making weight, the grappler and her team knew they were going to be in a world of suffering. She had put in weight — over 52 kg — during the course of her three bouts on Tuesday. With less than 12 hours remaining for the second and final weigh-in, the onerous, sometimes even dangerous task of shedding it began. She had to drink fluids to remain hydrated and eat light to keep her energy levels high. They spent an extra two hours on the mat, trying to lose about 2 kg. She exercised. She used the sauna. She sparred. When dawn broke over the Athletes Village, she was roughly 500 grams over. They even chopped off some hair.

At the weigh-in, the weighing scale returned three seemingly innocuous numbers — 50.1 — but it was enough to shatter her. After the unsavoury morning, the 29-year-old grappler went back to the Games Village and was administered drips for dehydration. It is understood that her blood pressure fell to 101/60. Post that, there was some blood work done to check all her health parameters because she had gone through extreme dehydration. Even as the news sent shockwaves across the wrestling fraternity, Phogat regrouped in her room. After fighting administrators on New Delhi's streets for over the last 18 months, she now hopes for a positive response from a bunch of lawyers in Lausanne. P17

Woman hit by truck near B'luru delivers baby, both die

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

AN eight-month pregnant woman, who was run over by a truck, died after giving birth to a baby girl near Yedehalli on NH 4 near Nelamangala on Wednesday morning. The baby too died after a few minutes.

Sinchana, 30, was returning home with her husband Manjunath on a scooter when a speeding truck hit their vehicle from behind.

Sinchana, who fell on the road, was run over by the truck. Sinchana suffered serious injuries and gave birth to a baby. However, both died within minutes of the accident.

Manjunath, an engineer with a private company, escaped with minor injuries. He was inconsolable and sat near the bodies till the police arrived at the spot.

Sinchana and Manjunath, residents of Thotanahalli, were returning home after visiting a temple near Shivagange in Dabaspet. CONTINUED ON: P5

MP CM: Have come to B'luru to invite IT majors to set up biz in my state

BALA CHAUHAN @Bengaluru

IN a major push to invite industries and boost investment opportunities, especially in the Information Technology sector in Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav arrived in the city along with his delegation on Wednesday for an interactive session with industrialists as part of the 'Road to Global Investors Summit (GIS)' series.

Soon after his arrival, Yadav visited the HAL campus and according to sources, the defence PSU is said to have evinced interest in setting up its unit in MP.

The MP CM is keen on pushing for investments in various sectors, and IT is its top priority. For the first time, the central Indian state is looking for investments in space technology and Bengaluru is the ideal place for both these niche sectors.

In an exclusive interview with TNIE, Yadav said there cannot be a better place than Bengaluru to look for investment opportunities in the IT sector. "We have come with open arms to meet the IT majors and business heads of various industries with an invitation to set up businesses in MP. Our intention is not to take away investments from Karnataka, but to invite them to MP also. We have a business-friendly industry policy and our 2023 IT policy is one of the best in the country," said Yadav.

Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Yadav | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

Yadav meets Gehlot

Madhya Pradesh CM Dr Mohan Yadav had a brief meeting with Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot, who is also from MP, at Raj Bhavan on Wednesday.

One of the biggest advantages of investing in MP is the competitive cost of living. "The industries can do their business at a much more competitive cost than Bengaluru. It will be a win-win situation for them and their workforce," Yadav said.

He said he had sent a team to recce Bengaluru and elicit views of the industries a few days ahead of his arrival. "We got positive feedback. During the two-day session in Bengaluru, we hope to convert those interests into commitments. We will invite all those, who have shown interest in investing in MP, to come for a regional conclave in Gwalior on August 28," Yadav said.

This will be followed by GIS in February next year. The two-day session, which began here on August 7, is aimed at boosting investment opportunities in Madhya Pradesh, and is in preparation for the 'Invest Madhya Pradesh-Global Investors Summit 2025' to be held in February next year.

Yadav has declared 2025 as Industrial Year for MP and has been seeking investments from outside the state. Before Bengaluru, he visited Mumbai and Coimbatore and got "successful feedback," he said.

The goal of the session is to position MP as the premier investment destination in the country by highlighting its abundant resources, skilled workforce, mining and favourable industrial environment to leading industrial institutions. INTERVIEW: P10

Yunus-led govt to take oath today

YESHI SELI @New Delhi

BANGLADESH army chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman said on Wednesday that the interim government headed by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus will be sworn in at 8.00 pm on Thursday. Bangladesh President Mohammed Shahabuddin had on Tuesday appointed Yunus as chief advisor to the caretaker government. The advisory council may have 15 members, the army chief said.

Yunus boarded a flight from Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris on Wednesday. Talking to reporters in Paris, he said he was hopeful of helping Bangladesh overcome its current turbulence. He also made an appeal to students, political parties, and non-political people to shun violence. "If we take the path of violence everything will be destroyed. Please stay calm. Help those around you to stay calm," he said.

Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus | PTI

Former prime minister and BNP chairperson Khalida Zia also called for peace. "Not destruction, not revenge, not vengeance. Let's build a society based on love, peace and knowledge," she said in a video from a hospital where she is undergoing treatment. Zia, who was jailed in 2018 on corruption charges, was freed on Wednesday on Shahabuddin's order.

On Wednesday, the Indian government arranged a special flight to fly out non-essential staffers at the Indian High Commission in Dhaka and four other missions across Bangladesh, and their family members. "Return of non-essential staff and families from the Indian High Commission in Dhaka has taken place on a voluntary basis through a commercial flight," a source told his paper.

The ground situation in Bangladesh continued to be volatile with the properties of Awami League members being destroyed.

The Indira Gandhi Centre in Dhaka and the residence of popular folk singer Rahul Ananda were among those vandalised. There were also reports of targeted attacks on Hindus. P7, 9, 12

Police on strike, students step in

With police personnel going on strike and Army troops going back to barracks, students carried out traffic management for the second consecutive day on Wednesday

Hasina's travel plans unclear

Former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina continues to be in India. She was to travel to a third country but there is no clarity on when she would do so. She is currently in a safe house in Delhi

LINK GONE

Built in 1982, the old Kali bridge, connecting Goa with Karwar on NH-66, collapsed on Wednesday morning. A truck plying on the bridge fell into the river, leaving the driver injured | P7

20% of organ seekers in state are techies

RISHITA KHANNA @Bengaluru

MORE than 20% of the 8,419 people waiting for a single organ transplant in the state are IT professionals.

According to sources in the Health Department, many of these IT professionals are suffering from organ failure due to unmanaged and chronic stress, hypertension or high blood pressure.

A notable rise in organ failure has been noticed among IT professionals, corporate workers, and others with demanding work schedules, an official from the department said.

The official attributed the alarming trend to high stress levels, poor dietary habits, and irregular sleep patterns – because of extended hours of sedentary work. These factors exacerbate health risks, leading to conditions that can result in organ failure.

The official said when someone is stressed all the time, their body produces stress hormones that can raise their heart rate and narrow blood vessels, leading to high BP. Stress can also lead to unhealthy habits like poor eating, not exercising, and reliance on smoking and drinking, which make high BP worse.

Long hours of sedentary work is a major contributor as extended sitting and minimal physical activity lead to cardiovascular problems, which heighten the risk of organ failure. High-stress work environments add to this, leading to chronic stress that can result in hypertension and diabetes — both significant risk factors for organ failure, the official said.

Finance Bill passed with 45 changes, including indexation tweaks

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman makes a point in the Lok Sabha | PTI

MONIKA YADAV @New Delhi

THE Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Finance Bill 2024 with 45 amendments, including easing of the long-term capital gains (LTCG) tax burden on real estate transactions.

With the amendment, individuals can calculate their LTCG tax under both the new regime (without indexation benefit) and the old regime (with indexation) and pay the lower tax. It means, people can choose to pay either 12.5% long-term capital gains tax without indexation or 20% with indexation benefit.

The House witnessed heated exchanges with the Opposition accusing the government of indulging in "tax terrorism", alleging that the Finance Bill should be renamed as "tax trap bill". Members from the Congress, TMC, and DMK said the Budget was so focussed on collecting more tax from the middle class that there was no measures to address the unemployment problem.

Opposition MPs staged a walkout after an amendment moved by RSP's N K Premchandran for removal of 18% GST on medical and life insurance premiums was not taken up.

In her response, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said states were levying taxes on premiums in pre-GST era.

CUT-OFF DATE IS JUL 23, 2024

For properties purchased after the cut-off date of July 23, 2024, only the new regime will apply. This means that buyers will face the LTCG tax at a rate of 12.5% without the benefit of indexation

RAISE IT IN GST COUNCIL: FM

FM Sitharaman said the GST Council is the right forum to take up any matter related to the GST and such an amendment could not be moved in Parliament as demanded by Opposition